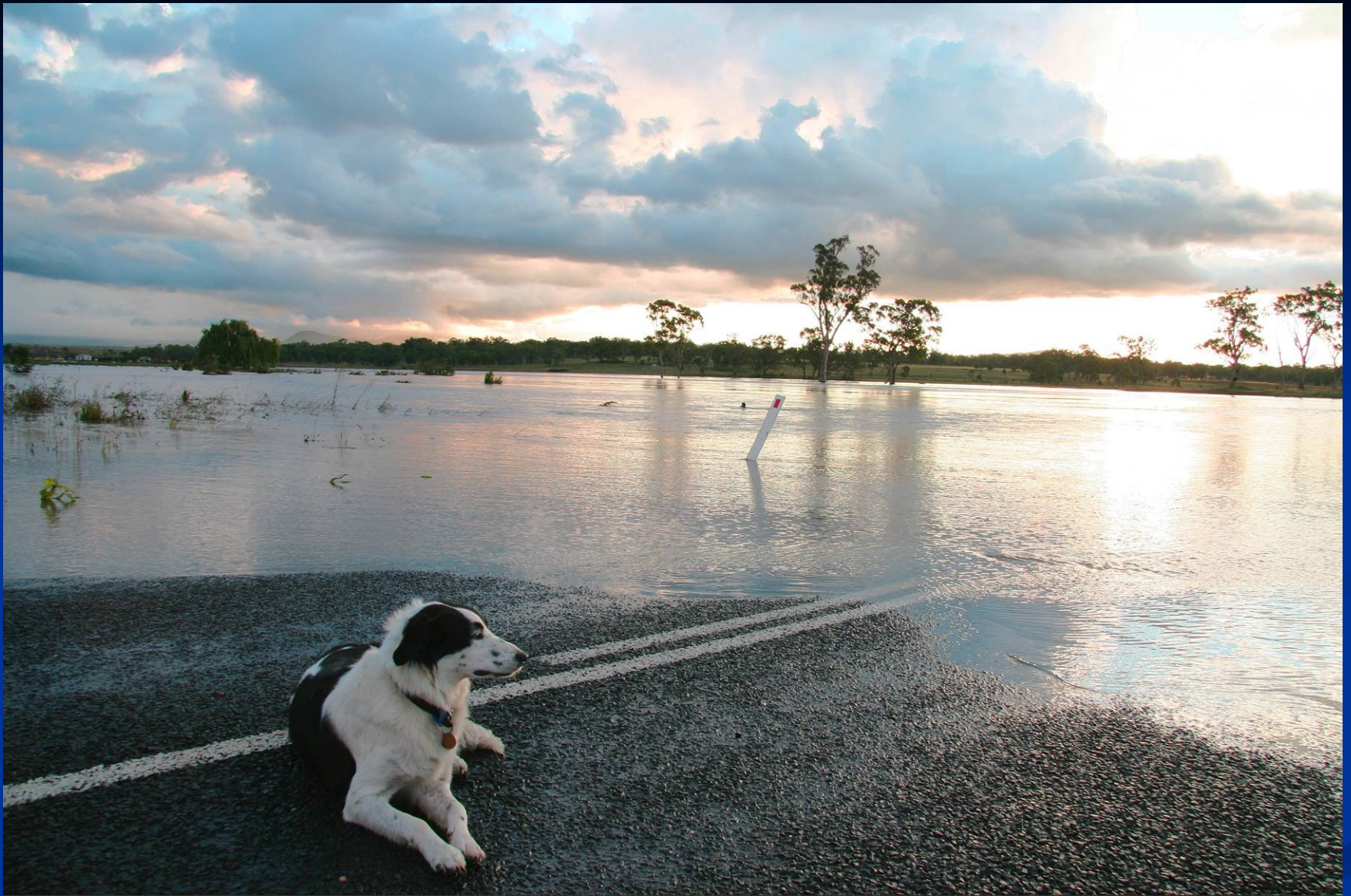


Hmm, Wonder If I Can Make It

Photos taken at the Murray's Bridge crossing
over the Condamine River in Southern
Queensland, Australia

May 2008



- Flooding in the upper Condamine in early January 2008 produced conditions unseen for more than a decade.



A car appears on the far side of the flooded bridge. The driver seems to be thinking about going for it.



- Ignoring the “Road Closed” sign, he heads straight in. Doesn’t even bother walking in a little to check the depth.

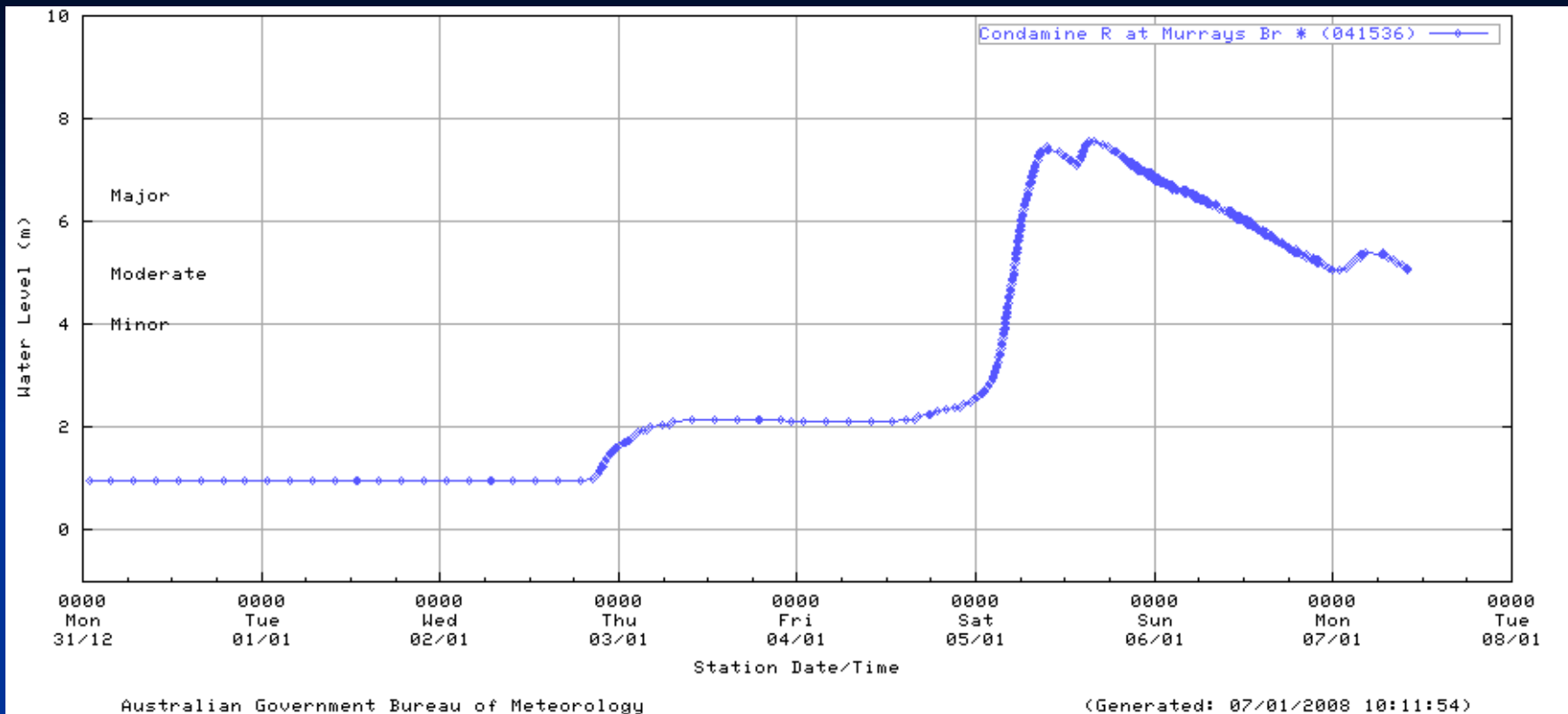




- Yes, he's towing a boat.



- The river is about 150 meters across and the current is really strong.



- This chart shows the peak of the flood recorded at the bridge recording station. The crossing attempt was made at 6 p.m.—the highest possible level.



- The Bridge is normally 6-7 meters above the water level here.



- The current pushes the vehicle and boat downstream.



- Note that there is now way to tell whether the bridge has been washed away.





- Note also the youthful passenger—a great lesson in risk management from the kid's father at the wheel.



- The driver seemed nonchalant as he opened the doors to let the water drain out. He announced that he had been through deeper water than that.

Questions

- Would you like to be his insurance agent?
- If he had a snorkel, would he try to drive underwater?
- Is this maneuver recommended in the owner's manual?
- Did he forget that he wasn't in the boat, towing the vehicle, instead of vice versa?

Closing Thought

- From Frank Young, emergency management director in Warren County, Ohio, commenting during the March 2008 floods: **“The biggest problem has been people driving into floodwater. There are a lot of stupid people. When that sign says, ‘Road closed, high water,’ that’s what it means.”**